
ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM

THE ANARCHIST LABOR MOVEMENT

AGRICULTURE

During the Spanish Civil War (1936) large farming estates were collectivized and self-managed by peasant farmers while family farms cooperated with collectives or joined them voluntarily to increase agricultural productivity.

Under late capitalism in the 21st Century, agriculture is a mix of family farms and large corporate holdings. The former organize co-ops and growers associations to market and sell their produce. The same could be done under worker self-management. Under worker self-management, corporate agriculture would be collectivized, decentralized, and self-managed by their workers. More prosperous workers will provide Mutual Aid to the less prosperous.

Insure the Food Supply

Co-ops and collectives will organize Regional Growers Associations [*a free association* to exchange information, *aka.* Emile Pouget] which will coordinate the transportation of agricultural goods to their consumers and distributors, *in exchange* for manufactured goods and other goods needed in rural areas. Unlike the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, food will be plentiful in rural and urban areas: No one will go hungry to feed the Rich, political party elites, or militarism/imperialism. We also need to reduce the loss of food due to storage and transportation spoilage.

We want to support local Farmers Markets in urban areas to enable producers to provide their produce directly to people in their communities. Big box food stores have increased food losses/spoilage in the name of variety. Variety is often diminished by charging food manufacturers for the shelf space they use to display their manufactured foods in the store. We want to strengthen support for the Food Bank system by taking MORE of the unsold food that would be discarded and making it available to the Food Banks. We also propose to create a system of Public Cafeterias for workers and students to get hot/nutritious free meals during the work/school day to help them be more productive/healthy [a standard food ration---like an off-duty military canteen/cafeteria].

Raise the Quality of Life for Agricultural Workers

Working conditions, health, nutrition, housing, clothing, education, job training, *etc.*. Use Regional Labor Exchanges [like French *Bourse du Travail*] to help supply produce growers with seasonal labor. In the US, farmworkers were specifically excluded from labor laws which allowed others to unionize and bargain collective [in exchange for political support from Southern political bosses and machines] during the Great Depression. American *apartheid* [called “Jim Crow Laws”] segregated African Americans, but especially tried to keep descendents of slaves in ignorance and in a social caste of servitude. More recently, many eastern *and* western farmworkers were Latinos, before government xenophobia, harassment, and deportation sweeps.

Corporate-owned farms and agricultural manufacturing would be collectivized and broken up into more manageable regional geographies. For seasonal workers, we support Farmworkers Unions and Agricultural Workers Associations and their right to represent workers interests [incl. sharecroppers]. Sharecropper estates/plantations will be collectivized under worker self-management.

Conservation of Land in Agricultural Production

Agricultural production will focus on local and regional demand first [and then import substitution before exports] to maximize the percentage of agricultural self-sufficiency [esp. for food/nutrition staples]. Regional Growers Associations can help farmers to plant for local demand. Mutualist “Farm Credit Unions” will form the basis of agricultural finance to prevent predatory lending [which was done by capitalists and government in the past] for new seed and farm equipment. We can also have Mutual Aid Associations [group self-insurance] to support producers through lean years and natural disasters. We need to protect agricultural land from development [suburbanization, commercial, and industrial]. We also need to emphasize soil conservation and erosion prevention.

We want to end the practice of converting food [e.g., grains: corn/maize, rice, *etc.*] to fuel: stop the use of ethanol as a fuel for internal combustion engines like automobiles, or in the manufacture of fertilizers. We diminish the practice, globally, of making food more expensive/scarcely by using it for energy rather than low-cost nutrition.

De-Industrialize Agriculture

Ending “factory farming” practices will make our products healthier for people and the Earth. Animals raised in cloistered conditions may be more prone to disease than those raised “free range” [outdoors in a more natural habitat].. Animal keeping on ranch and farm and urban wastewater sludge are good sources of natural fertilizer which can replace chemicals. We want to use natural fertilizers and pesticide substitutes where possible.

Fish can also be farmed rather than over-fishing oceans and freshwater resources. We can make more use of greenhouses to grow herbs and medicinal plants; to grow food off season and in cold weather and urban environments]. Expensive farm machinery can be shared between cooperation farms and collectives.

Reduce the Chemical Content of Foods

There may be a link between unnatural chemical exposure, the cumulative influence of other pollutants, and human cell cancers. The cumulation of artificial food additives and preservatives contributes to this. The desire for unlimited shelf life for food products is an incentive to chemically treat natural foods. The decentralization of food production and increased localization of fresh food supplies will reduce the demand (and economy) for so-called “processed foods”. We also want to review the chemical content of processed foods to insure ingredients are safe [or not unhealthy] for human consumption and labeled on packaging.

We need to rethink the proximity of manufacturing and animal husbandry to other food production where there is a chance of *cross-contamination* [contamination of the biosphere which may get into the food or water supply].

Oppose Genetically Modified Foods

Human diseases have their historical origins in animals that more primitive—less hygienic—humans once herded or lived in close proximity to. The human pathogens were mutated strains of pathogens common in the animals. We invite disaster by increasing the odds of new pathogens which would otherwise evolve as an aberration.

Public Works Projects to Protect Farmland

We need a new generation of flood control infrastructure to protect people and agriculture from the effects of global warming and violent weather: flooding in particular. We should prioritize raising or adding levees to urban centers on the gulf coast which are most vulnerable to hurricane-driven ocean swells. We need to rethink building codes to increase the safety of new structures [esp. housing] against hurricane wind damage.

Flooding in the Mississippi-Missouri-Ohio River basin created large *seasonal* lakes and swamps in colonial times. Global Warming has been increasing snowfall and rainfall which contribute to flooding in some river basins. Raising levees and dredging rivers may not be enough to accommodate growth in precipitation. Flood plains may have to be increased. Residential communities may have to be bermed and protected at the expense of surrounding farms. All residences may not be protectable.

Other areas like California’s Sacramento River Delta have agriculture in reclaimed wetlands which may also be threatened by Global Warming (rising sea levels or seasonal stormwater increases). In the future, we may have to reclaim agricultural lands which are (or may be) inundated by rising sea levels, like in the Netherlands, but we need to wait and see where growing areas are threatened before choosing [prioritizing] which areas will be reclaimed.

We would organize Conservation Engineering Collectives [like a new Civilian Conservation Corp].and employ people who are healthy and looking for work, regardless of experience. Public works projects would provide on the job training along with work camps for basic needs like food, hygiene, and housing/shelter. Public works projects require the cooperation of affected urban and rural communities. They also require an infusion of Mutual Aid from other communities who depend (or may depend) on them for food and other agricultural products. Workforces which are not available locally can be recruited through Labor Exchanges in other areas. Labor Exchanges will share information with their counterparts in other economic regions to facilitate this kind of employment [especially, specialized jobs like heavy construction and engineering which may not offer enough work in one community or region].